

REMARKS

Applicants reply to the Examiner's comments in the Advisory Action mailed on June 22, 2007, and submit these remarks and amendments. Applicants request that the Examiner consider the amendments and remarks prior to examining the above-referenced patent application after RCE. The Examiner rejects claims 1-15 in the subject application. Claims 1-15 (1 independent claim; 15 total claims) remain pending in the application. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-12 and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hanaya (USP 5,754,258). The Examiner also rejects claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hanaya. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Applicants respectfully assert that the Examiner may be incorrectly interpreting claim 1 to mean that during the switching from the second audio signal to the first audio signal performed by the audio signal switch section 108, the mute section 106 mutes the first audio signal which is output from the audio signal switch section 108. Thereafter, using such inaccurate interpretation, the Examiner asserts that claim 1 reads on the disclosure Hanaya.

Applicants respectfully assert that one of ordinary skilled in the art would undoubtedly understand that the intended meaning of claim 1 is that when the audio signal output from the audio signal switch section is switched from the second audio signal to the first audio signal (i.e. after switching), the mute section 106 mutes the first audio signal which is output from the audio signal switch section 108. This is because one of ordinary skilled in the art would understand that the audio signal switch section 108 cannot be outputting the first audio signal unless the audio signal switch section has switched the second audio signal to the first audio signal.

In addition, as clearly explained in the specification, for example, when the audio signal output through the audio output terminal 112 is switched from the audio signal 130 (e.g., "second audio signal") to the external audio signal 124 (e.g., "first audio signal"), the external audio signal 124 ("first audio signal") output from the audio signal switch section 108 (i.e., output from audio output terminal 112) is muted (see page 14, lines 18-23).

As such, although Applicants disagree with the Examiner's rejection, Applicants clarify the intended meaning of claim 1 to expedite prosecution of this case. Amended claim 1 now recites, "a mute section for muting the first audio signal which is output from the audio signal switch section when the audio signal output from the audio signal switch section is switched by the audio signal

switch section switches from the second audio signal to the first audio signal" (emphasis added). Support for such amendment is found at, for example, page 14, lines 18-23.

As clearly shown in Figure 25 of Hanaya, when the audio signal to be output is switched from the "second audio signal" (i.e., sound associated with the program before switching) to the "first audio signal" (i.e., sound associated with the program after switching), Hanaya clearly discloses that the "first audio signal" is output (see col. 22, lines 3-15 of Hanaya). That is, Hanaya fails to teach or suggest that the sound associated with the program after switching is muted. In fact, in the Final Office Action, the Examiner admits that the program after switching is not muted. In addition, the Examiner reinforces such position in the Advisory Action by stating that Hanaya teaches relieving the sound after switching.

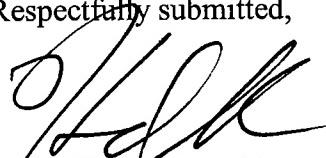
Accordingly, Applicants assert that Hanaya fails to teach or suggest at least "a mute section for muting the first audio signal which is output from the audio signal switch section when the audio signal to be output from the audio signal switch section is switched by the audio signal switch section from the second audio signal to the first audio signal," as recited in amended claim 1.

Claims 2-15 variously depend from independent claim 1, so Applicants assert that claims 2-15 are differentiated from the cited references for at least the reasons set forth above, in addition to their own respective features.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees, which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-2814. Applicants invite the Examiner to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner has any questions whatsoever regarding this Reply or the present application in general.

Respectfully submitted,

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